

Renovations

House renovations can range in size from replacing windows or a new coat of paint to adding a second or third floor of living space or a wing to a house. These can provide for more living space and more natural daylight, enhancing the quality and value of a house. Renovations can also harm a house if poorly executed and even the most beautiful house could become an eyesore despite an expensive addition. Similarly, an inexpensive, but well-detailed modification to an existing house could add significant value.

The key to effective renovating lies in understanding the appropriate design elements, massing and appropriate materials that create the architecture of a house. This section and the next will help homeowners identify their traditional house style and offer strategies for designing renovations and additions that can give the house a distinct character related to one of the traditional Norfolk styles.

Scope

Before starting, determine the scope of your project. Would you like a new look for your house, just need a few repairs, or do you need more living space? By understanding the scope of your desired improvements, you will be able to determine if this is a do-it-yourself repair or requires the expertise of a builder or architect.

Renovations may include window replacement, a new front door, front porch restoration, roof and gutter replacement, brick repointing and repair, new paint, new siding or the replacement of aged or damaged siding. Larger renovations may include adding box and bay windows, dormers and porches.

Additions are generally larger than renovations and may consist of major changes to the house especially in terms of the massing of the house. Additions may include the construction of a wing—typically on the side or rear, the addition of a second or habitable third story, or the construction of an ancillary structure, such as a garage, somewhere on the site. In general, additions should reflect the architectural style of the main house

body. Additions to post-war houses, as discussed on the Transformation pages (C-23 – C-25), should tend toward one of the applicable Norfolk styles.

Age

After you have a sense of the size of your project, determine the age of your house. The age of your neighborhood may be a good clue. Do you live in a nineteenth-century, early-twentieth-century, or post-war neighborhood? Refer to the Neighborhood Patterns section for more information.

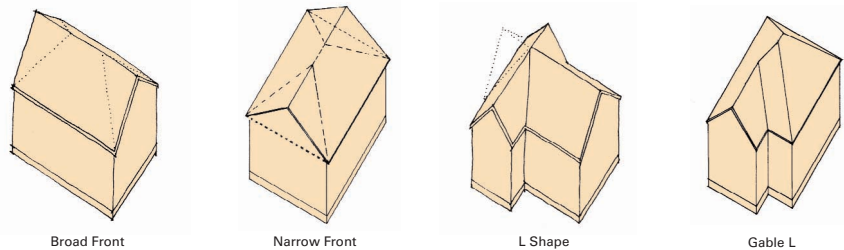
Style

Finally, identify the architectural style of your house:

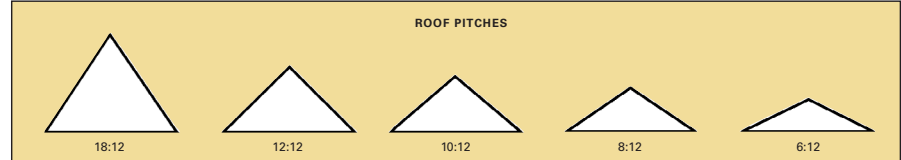
1 DETERMINE MASSING FORM

Compare the shape of your house with the index of massings (basic house shapes) shown below.

BASIC MASSING TYPES FOR NORFOLK HOUSES



ROOF PITCHES



APPROPRIATE ROOF PITCHES FOR ARCHITECTURAL STYLES

MASSING	18 TO 13:12	12:12	11:12	10:12	9:12	8:12	7:12	6:12	5:12
Broad	—	—	—	—	Class. Rev.	Class. Rev.	Class. Rev.	—	—
	—	Col. Rev.	Col. Rev.	Col. Rev.	Col. Rev.	Col. Rev.	Col. Rev.	—	—
	—	—	—	—	—	Arts & Crafts	Arts & Crafts	Arts & Crafts	Arts & Crafts
	—	Coastal	Coastal	Coastal	—	—	—	—	—
Narrow	—	—	—	—	—	—	Class. Rev.	Class. Rev.	Class. Rev.
	—	Col. Rev.	Col. Rev.	Col. Rev.	Col. Rev.	Col. Rev.	Col. Rev.	—	—
	—	—	—	—	—	Arts & Crafts	Arts & Crafts	Arts & Crafts	Arts & Crafts
	—	Victorian	Victorian	Victorian	Victorian	Victorian	—	—	—
L-Shape	—	—	—	—	—	Arts & Crafts	Arts & Crafts	Arts & Crafts	—
	—	—	Victorian	Victorian	Victorian	Victorian	—	—	—
	European	European	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	Coastal	Coastal	Coastal	Coastal	Coastal	Coastal	—	—	—
Gable L	—	—	—	Col. Rev.	Col. Rev.	Col. Rev.	Col. Rev.	Col. Rev.	—
	—	—	—	—	—	Arts & Crafts	Arts & Crafts	Arts & Crafts	—
	—	Victorian	Victorian	Victorian	Victorian	Victorian	—	—	—
	European	European	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

Renovations & Additions to Historic Houses

If you are the owner of an historic house, it should be relatively easy for you to tell the style of your house. You may already know the year it was built. It is advisable to seek the services of an architect familiar with traditional architecture to help guide you through major renovations or additions. As you proceed through design, make sure that your architect remains sensitive to neighborhood and architectural patterns.

New additions to nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century houses should typically be designed as secondary elements or wings that preserve the integrity of the Main Body of the original house. Additions should never be bigger than the house itself or too wide or you'll wind up with a "McMansion" where the proportions and scale of the traditional house are lost and the house feels too big or over-scaled for its setting within the neighborhood. Wings should be set back from the front

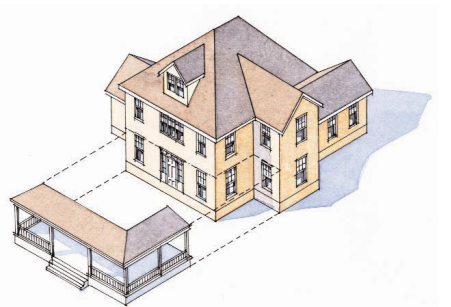
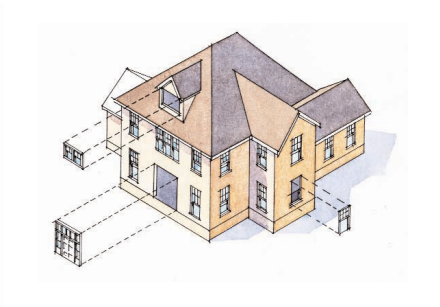
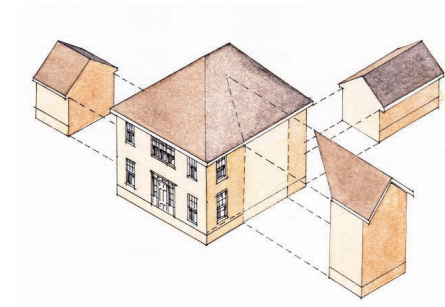
facade of the house a distance no less than half the width of the wing (see page C-20). As shown in the photos at right and below, a one-story addition to a two-story house is very common.

Renovations to nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century houses may include the replacement of windows; roofing materials; reconstruction of soffits, gutters, and fascias; dormers; chimneys; and restoration or replacement of damaged or previously demolished porches.

In general, new replacement windows should respect the original window light pattern, and should have the same, or similar, profile (trim dimensions) as the existing windows. Whenever possible, repair or replacement of roof materials should be performed with like materials. When construction costs prohibit this, a less expensive material of similar color and look is encouraged.



A one-story addition on a Norfolk Classical Revival house



A two-story Main Body with one-story additions on both sides (Norfolk Colonial Revival)



A one-and-one-half-story addition (Norfolk Coastal Cottage)



A two-story addition creating a four-bay composition (Norfolk Colonial Revival)



A one-story addition (Norfolk European Romantic)



A one-and-one-half-story addition providing a garage with living space above (Norfolk Colonial Revival)



A two-story addition (Norfolk Coastal Cottage)

Additions

The most common means of increasing living space is through the addition of a side or front wing which can have a great effect on the appearance of your house. For that reason it is critical for you and your architect to understand the appropriate means of enlarging your house to ensure a well-composed facade.

The first step in determining what type of addition is appropriate is to understand the dimensions (width and height) of your existing house (as well as your lot) so that you and your architect can determine the size of your addition.

Guidelines for Adding Wings

Side wings should step back no less than 2 feet from the front facade of the Main Body mass to ensure that the addition visually maintains a subordinate role.

Different Main Body masses require different types of wing additions. For example, it would be acceptable to add a one-story wing to a two-story house, but not acceptable to add a two-story wing to a one-story house. In general, wings—whether front, side or rear—should have a subordinate relationship to the Main Body mass. The drawings on the right are taken from the architectural style sections and represent the proper relationship between main house massing and wing size. The photos at the bottom of the page are also examples of well-proportioned additions to houses from Norfolk neighborhoods.

The following guidelines will help you to keep your wing additions on course:

WIDTH

One-story wings should never exceed half the width of the Main Body of the house. Two-story wings should not exceed one-third of the house width. One-story houses should only have one-story wings, while two-story houses may have either one- or two-story wings. As shown in a few photos, symmetrical one-story additions on either side of a two-story Main Body create a balanced composition.

FRONT SETBACKS

Wings should never be built flush with the front facade. Preferably, wings should be set back a distance from the front facade no less than half the width of the wing. Garage or carriage porch wings should be set back a distance equal to the width of the wing.

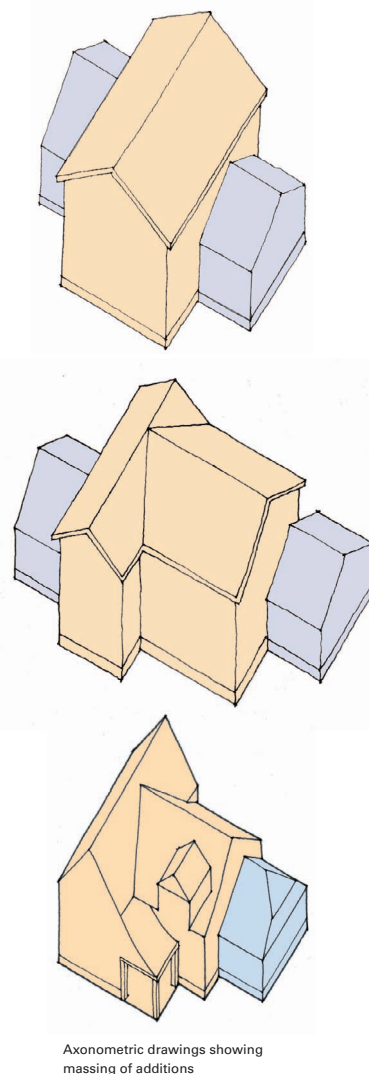
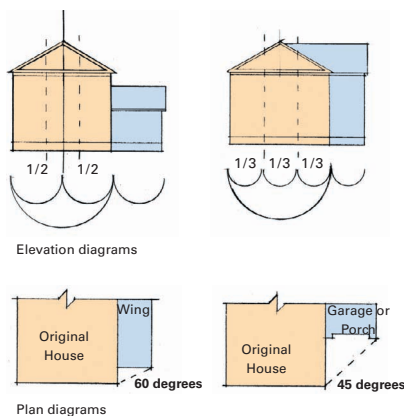
Addition Possibilities

The following two pages provide examples of how to enlarge a Norfolk house through a variety of means, such as adding a side wing, adding a second floor, adding a living porch, or adding a front wing or “nose”, as well as build upon the architectural characteristics of the house, enhancing them through the addition. Photos of existing Norfolk houses are used as starting points to illustrate the process of proposing an addition.

By providing both a photo and a drawing of the existing house facade (before elevation) as well as one after the addition (after elevation) one can understand the impact the addition has on the facade.

An axonometric drawing shows the house on the lot from above and provides an understanding of the relationship of the addition to the side or front yard as well as the driveway and typical garage location. This drawing shows the existing house in a yellow color and the addition in a blue color.

The text explains the type of addition, the effect of the addition on the front facade and the potential floor plan changes that are possible.



Axonometric drawings showing massing of additions



Addition No. 1: Arts & Crafts Wing Addition

This type of addition can provide a considerable quantity of space on two floors for both living and sleeping as well as enlarging the outdoor living space. This addition creates a large two-story wing addition, stepped back from the front facade, which makes the original house appear to be a front “nose,” or addition. This is a wonderful means of enlarging a house without creating a facade that is inappropriately too wide (a common problem for larger additions).

Since it's quite common to have the kitchen and dining room at the rear of the front floor, this addition could provide for an enlarged dining space or a combined dining/family space in the rear with direct access to the back yard. The upstairs addition could be used for creating a true master bedroom suite or just two new bedrooms. Also proposed is a full, wraparound porch that is common on Arts & Crafts style houses.

When considering an addition of this scale, it is important to consider the dimension of your lot and the amount of space needed for the addition and the driveway, if needed, as well as to maintain acceptable side yard setbacks.

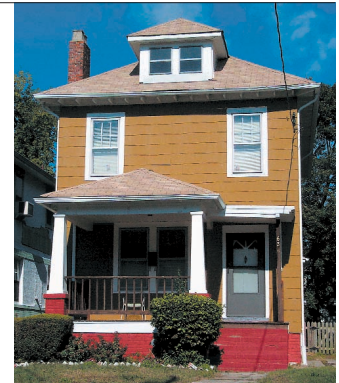
The architectural character of this house is enhanced by maintaining the same roof pitch as the original house, returning to architecturally correct windows and doors, and adding onto the Arts & Crafts porch to make a grand outdoor living space.



Existing elevation



Proposed elevation with side wing and expanded front porch

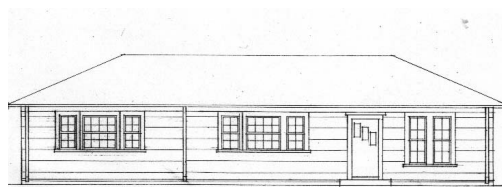
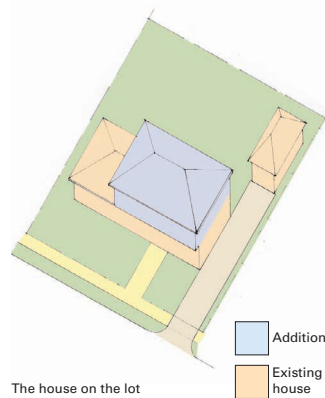


Existing Norfolk Arts & Crafts house

Addition No. 2: Colonial Revival Pop-up Addition

This addition provides a generous quantity of living or bedroom space on a new floor by “popping up” a second living level over the majority of this relatively long house. By stepping in the addition so it isn't as long as the house itself, the proportions of the front facade are reduced, thus giving the house a more vertical appearance, which is more typical for this style. This addition could allow for existing first floor bedrooms to move upstairs and thus create larger living, kitchen and dining spaces on the first floor. An important consideration on the redesign of the first floor is finding an appropriate location for the new stair to the second floor.

Building on the Colonial Revival tendencies of the house, this addition shows architecturally correct second-floor windows and trim, and a new door with side-lights. Lower-level windows are replaced with a triple window composition of traditional proportions to match the windows on the opposite side and provide a symmetrical facade composition in keeping with traditional Colonial Revival houses.



Existing elevation



Proposed elevation with second floor



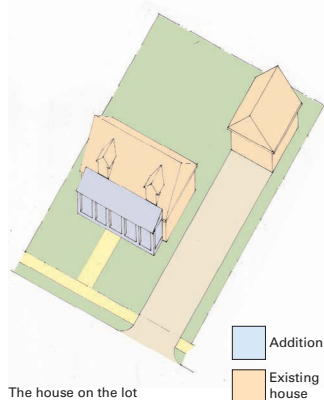
Existing Norfolk ranch house with Colonial Revival details

Addition No. 3: Colonial Revival Front Porch

One of the simplest building additions that can dramatically improve the appearance of a house is to add a full or even partial front porch. Many Norfolk houses of the early-to-mid twentieth-century have small entry porches or just canopies. Although functional for rain protection, these porches are not suited for outdoor living space. To be a comfortable and functional exterior space, the porch should be 8 feet in depth.

When considering a porch addition, consider the location of the porch relative to the depth of your front yard, the massing of your house, the approach to the porch (side or front entry) as well as the front door location and window articulation. For this example, a full front porch works best. The house has a symmetrical window composition, centered front door and a generous front yard which can accommodate a deep sitting porch.

Building on the Colonial Revival tendencies of this house, a full front porch addition (properly detailed in terms of column type, height, and diameter; railing selection; eave details; and roof pitch) can quite economically add usable space while also lending a "Colonial Williamsburg" look to this house.



Existing Norfolk Colonial Revival house



Existing elevation



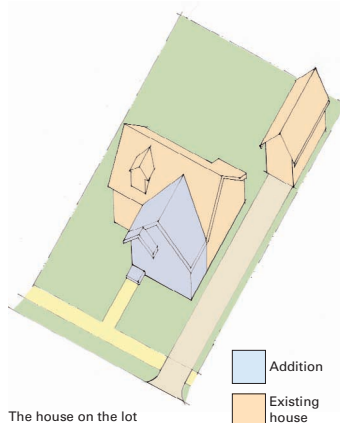
Proposed elevation with full front porch

Addition No. 4: Coastal Cottage Nose or Front Addition

If you have a deep front yard, a typical means to enlarge a house is to add on living space, in this case a nose or front addition, by enlarging a family room or swapping the living room with the dining room and then adding on more space at the front of the house. These additions are typically 12 feet or more in depth to provide for a comfortable and functional space.

This type of addition can help to provide both usable interior space as well as provide or improve a vestibule or entry foyer. When considering this type of addition, determine if your front yard is deep enough to accommodate a 12- to 16-foot wing yet still maintain a front yard that is in keeping with your neighborhood. This addition also provides an opportunity to enhance the architectural style of your house through appropriate doors, windows, trim and style elements such as brackets, half-timbering, exposed rafter tails, dormers, or accent windows.

The proposed elevation at right builds upon the Coastal Cottage style of this house by cladding the addition in the same material as the house, matching the eave detailing of the house in the addition, and adding a simple entry porch and accent window on the second floor.



Existing Norfolk Coastal Cottage house

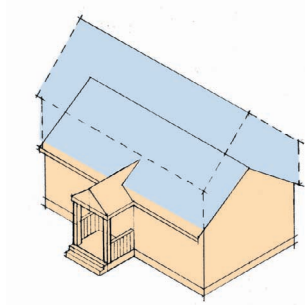


Existing elevation

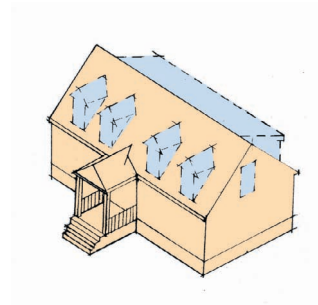


Proposed elevation

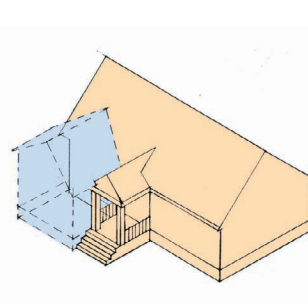
Transformations



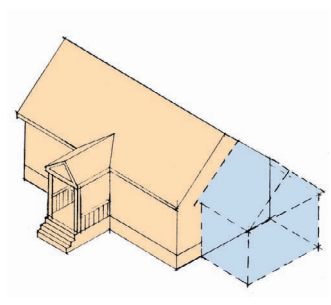
Full story pop-ups



Half-story pop-ups



Noses



Wings

Transformations of Post-War Houses

The population of the United States mushroomed after the Second World War as young GIs returned home to their families. Builders met the demand for housing through the mass construction of simple, modest, though well-built houses. Today, these post-war houses dot the American landscape and provide homes for millions of Americans. In Norfolk, these houses are typically found in the neighborhoods that form the outer ring of the city, such as Norview, Azalea Acres to the east, and Bayview Beach and Oceanair to the north.

Because these houses were built all across the country, they lack regional distinction. These transformation pages provide you and your architect with direc-

tion on the appropriate means of enlarging an existing house in terms of massing and location while also enhancing any existing architectural style references in your house. Where no distinct style is apparent, the pages will help you select an appropriate, distinctly Norfolk architectural character from the Architectural Patterns section based on the massing and proportions of the house.

Type of House Additions

When it comes to additions, post-war houses provide more possibilities than their older counterparts. On the following pages, we illustrate a variety of methods to increase the usability of your house, ranging from the simple addition of an outdoor living space via a new porch, to the modest addition of a first

floor living space, to a grander addition of a full second floor providing for more bedrooms and bathrooms, and finally to a full transformation of a house which incorporates several additions: a new front porch, a partial second floor and the enclosure of the carport into a garage.

We've given names to some of these methods, such as *pop-up*, *nose*, and *wing*, which are illustrated above. Any of these will provide more living space in your house.

POP-UPS (FULL & HALF-STORY)

You can add space by building a partial or full second floor on your house. Or, if your house is already a one-and-one-half-story structure, you can add more living space on the second floor by adding a shed dormer to either the front or rear.

NOSES

Essentially a wing, noses project into the front yard. Noses are never more than half the width of the house and are never less than 8 feet deep. They typically provide more space for a living or family room.

WINGS

The quintessential addition to houses, wings may project from the side or rear of the building and may be one or two stories depending on the existing house.

PORCH ADDITIONS (NOT SHOWN)

Usually the smallest, most economical and least obtrusive addition, porches can add a great deal to the appearance and usability of a house.



The main body



The main body



The main body



The main body



The enclosed breezeway and garage addition



The garage addition



The side wing addition



The open breezeway and garage addition

Transformation No. 1: Colonial Revival Pop-up and Wing Additions

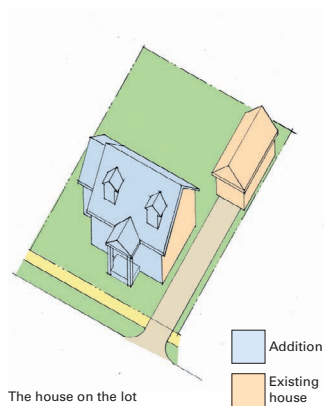
This transformation provides more interior living space through two additions: a pop-up creating a one-and-one-half-story house and a side wing, while also introducing Colonial Revival elements on the facade.

The pop-up provides usable space on a new floor for bedrooms or bathrooms while the side wing could accommodate an expanded living space, larger kitchen, or a den, office space or library.

The house pictured at right is very similar to many post-war houses found throughout Norfolk and could easily be transformed into a Colonial Revival style house with its new one-and-one-half-story massing.

The additions also provide the opportunity to incorporate a Colonial Revival vocabulary through the use of appropriate entry porch, front door and transom, well-proportioned first floor windows and Colonial Revival dormers.

When contemplating a side wing addition, consider the width of the addition relative to the width of the house. Also consider the distance between your house and the property line to make sure an appropriate dimension is maintained.



Existing Norfolk post-war house



Existing elevation



Proposed elevation

Transformation No. 2: Victorian Pop-up, Nose, and Porch Additions

This transformation adds a full second story that can accommodate bedroom and bathroom space, allowing the first floor family spaces, such as the kitchen, dining and living areas, to expand. If desired, the attic space could provide a partial third floor which could be finished to provide even more space.

The existing house has an inset porch; this space is maintained by an add-on front porch. The garage is maintained and should just receive new garage doors appropriate for a Victorian style.

Houses, such as the one shown in the photo at right, are very common in Norfolk's post-war communities. A pop-up addition to this type of house, consider the depth of your front yard to determine if your lot can accommodate an addition and still maintain a contextual front yard. In this example, the addition extends 8 feet into the front yard.



Existing Norfolk post-war house



Existing elevation



Proposed elevation with pop-up addition

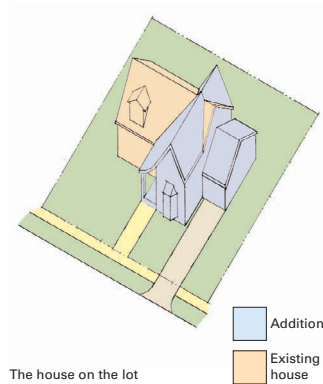
Transformation No. 3: European Romantic Front Nose & Garage

Another variation of a front nose addition to a European Romantic style house provides additional living and bedroom space. A side wing provides an enclosed one-car garage. The small porch is removed and replaced with a new one- and one-half-story wing which also provides an inset porch. As with the Coastal Cottage addition on page C-22, this nose should be a minimum of 12 feet deep to create a usable room.

By replacing the porch with the wing, the second floor is expanded which could provide a larger bedroom or bathroom, or both. Be sure to determine if your house is set back far enough to accommodate an addition.

Although the existing house doesn't feature many European Romantic architectural elements, it does have an appropriate massing and material choice for an addition which can provide architectural character for the house.

The garage addition should follow the guidelines for setback rules as described on page C-26.



Existing Norfolk post-war house



Existing elevation



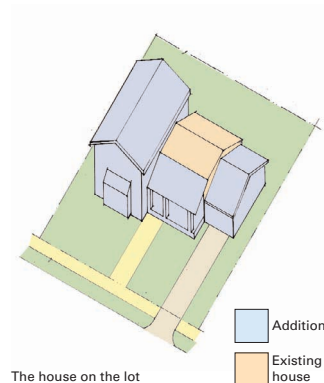
Proposed transformed elevation

Transformation No. 4: Arts & Crafts Pop-up, Porch & Garage Addition

This transformation provides a second-story addition, a new full front porch and encloses the carport into a garage. The pop-up can provide bedroom and bathroom space above while allowing larger kitchen, dining and living spaces on the lower level. The enclosed garage can provide secure storage space as well.

Through the addition of elements of the Arts & Crafts architectural vocabulary such as correctly styled porch with tapered half-height columns on brick piers and square railings, a triple window expression over the box bay on the new nose addition, Arts & Crafts style garage doors and front door, and eave brackets, this plain post-war house is transformed into a well-proportioned Arts & Crafts house.

As with other additions, make sure that a side wing addition is possible for your house based on the existing house width in relationship to the lot width.



Existing Norfolk post-war house



Existing elevation



Proposed transformed elevation

Garages & Other Ancillary Structures



Historic photo of a detached Norfolk garage



Historic photo of an ancillary structure adjacent to a Norfolk house



Historic photo of an ancillary structure adjacent to a Norfolk house

Ancillary Structures

Ancillary structures may include garages, carriage houses (a garage with a livable second floor), and garden sheds and pavilions. These structures should always be smaller than the main house and, whenever possible, should have similar detailing as the main house. In general, ancillary structures are detached from the main body of the house although they may be connected with a variety of elements like breezeways, fences or pergolas.

Detached Garages & Carriage Houses

The construction of garages and carriage houses can add great value to an existing home. It is best to locate garages at the back of your lot if possible, though it is also possible to build tasteful, attached garages. The principal issues with garages are the size, location and detailing for the doors. A common problem with current construction is that the garage additions often overwhelm the scale and character of the house. General principles for siting and designing garages are listed below.

THE CORNER LOT

For houses on corner lots, the garage should be located in the rear yard close to the property line, turned to face the side street, and be set back to match the house's setback, if possible. It is preferable to locate the garage so that the parking area in front of the garage is at least 15 feet back (18 feet preferred) from the side street property line. This prevents parked cars from encroaching into the public sidewalk which creates a safety hazard.

Corner lots are also good places for two- or three-car carriage houses which incorporate a small apartment, studio or workshop above.

Single-width garage doors up to 8 feet wide are recommended. Paneled door styles appropriate to the style of the house should be used. Doors with divided lights

are recommended, as shown in the photos on the next page. Often it is better to paint the doors a deeper, more contrasting color to help offset the large size, depending on the color palette of the house.

THE IN-LINE LOT

In many cases, there may be enough room to build a one-, two-, or even a three-car garage in the rear yard of a relatively narrow lot. Access to the garage is typically from a narrow driveway, usually 8 to 9 feet wide, that slips along one side of the house.

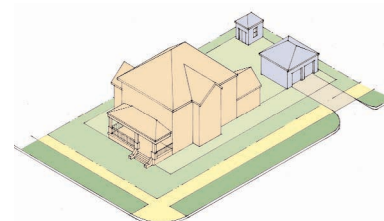
A carriage porch was often used to provide a drop-off at the house and is a good way to screen the back yard and garage area from the front (see photos of existing Norfolk carriage porches on the next page). It is recommended that the garage be placed in the rear of the lot to provide turnaround space between the house and the garage.

ATTACHED GARAGE

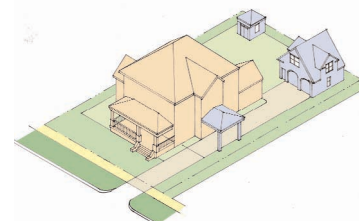
If an attached garage is preferred over a detached one and the lot is wide enough, a one-car garage is recommended. An attached two-car garage addition can create a massing problem in which the garage appears wider than the house. Two- or three-car garages should be detached and located in the rear of the lot.

Attached one-car garages should be treated as any wing addition in terms of its setback from the front of the house (a distance equal to the width of the garage) and its architectural character, which should match that of the house.

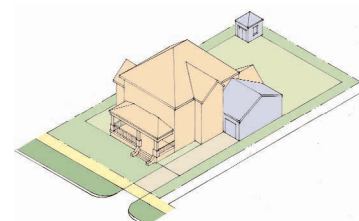
Attached garages are typically built a step or two down from the main living level to prevent gases from seeping into the main living areas.



Ancillary structures include pavilions and detached garages on a corner lot



A porte cochère (carriage porch) and a carriage house is shown on a mid-block lot



An attached garage on a mid-block lot



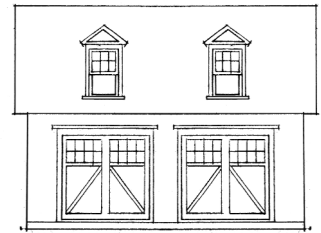
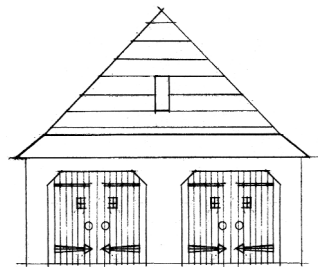
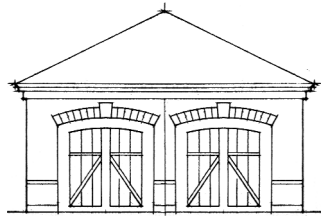
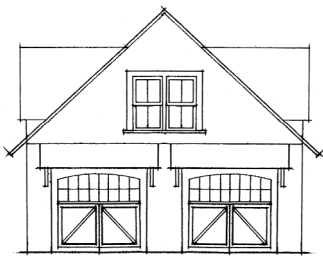
Historic photo of a carriage house with ancillary structures behind



Historic aerial view of the Larchmont neighborhood showing houses, garages, ancillary structures, and driveways on a typical block



Examples of traditional Norfolk garages



Possibilities for garages



Examples of garage doors commercially available for traditional houses – Colonial, European Romantic, Victorian, and Coastal Cottage



Typical single-car garage additions and carriage porches on traditional houses stay in scale with the house